

# University of Essex Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary 2022-23

The University is offering a Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary to assist students who are care leavers, care-experienced students, Foyer leavers, or estranged students.

## Terms and Conditions

### Eligibility

Below is a list of the full eligibility criteria for the Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary, you must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for an award:

- You are a new or continuing, full time or part-time **registered** student at the University of Essex in academic year 2022/23
- You are eligible for UK home fees and funding and ordinarily resident in the UK (**overseas and EU students are not eligible**)
- You are undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate study

### AND

You have been in care at any point in your life, for any period of time. This includes -

#### Care leavers

You have been 'looked after' for at least 13 weeks by a UK local authority at some point since you were 14 years old, and were in care on or after your sixteenth birthday;

#### Other care experienced

- You spent time in the care of the local authority (e.g. foster care or children's home)
- You were privately fostered
- You were 'looked after at home' under a supervision order

- You were in kinship foster care (where a friend or family member becomes the foster carer). Kinship care through a formal arrangement, recognised by a Local Authority, and could be prior to a Special Guardianship Order.

**OR**

### Estranged

You are estranged from both parents/carers and are under the age of 25 at the start of the academic year. By estranged we mean that either:

- You have not communicated with either of your biological or adoptive parents for a period of time before your course began
- Your parents cannot be traced or it is not possible, practical, or safe to make contact with them
- Your parents have significant mental or physical health problems which prevent you from contacting them
- Both of your biological or adoptive parents are deceased

### **Students who are not eligible**

The following students are not eligible for this award regardless of meeting the above criteria:

- Students who are not in attendance, and on an assessment only programme
- Students whose course is sponsored by an employer
- Students on a distance learning programme
- Students on unsubstantial part-time or short courses
- Students who are studying through a University of Essex Partner (e.g. Kaplan, University of Essex Online, Tavistock, etc.)
- Students on Higher/Degree Apprenticeship courses

### **Evidence**

To support your application, you **MUST** provide evidence that you were in local authority care prior to starting your course or that you are estranged from both parents/carers.

#### Care leaver:

A Care leaver is defined as a person who, as a result of an order of a competent court, was in care for at least 3 months up to or after their 16th birthday and has not since been returned to the care of their parents.

Evidence would normally be a letter from your Personal Adviser/After Care Social Worker, other forms of evidence may be accepted.

### Care-experienced student

You will need to provide a letter on headed paper from the local authority where you spent time in care or with another official organisation who dealt with your care at the time it took place. This letter needs to confirm that you have spent time in care and ideally what type of care this was, see options under the eligibility section.

### Estranged Student

You need to provide evidence of 'genuine estrangement'. This can be any one of the following:

- Letter from your social or Council support worker
- Letter from a doctor that knows your situation
- Police report showing any related incidents
- Letter from a teacher or university/college lecturer that knows your situation
- Letter from a 'person of good standing in the community' (for example a solicitor, religious leader or a counsellor, who is not related to you)
- Letter from a housing organisation (if you were trying to find alternative accommodation)
- Letter of support from a counselling or similar organisation who may have been helping with your estrangement
- A court order, showing you were trying to distance yourself from your parents
- A copy of a Confirmation of Estrangement form (SFE form) that has been submitted to and accepted by SFE.
- Email confirmation from SFE that you have been assessed as an independent student on the basis of estrangement.

*Note: you will not be considered estranged simply on the basis that you live separately from your parents, have recently fallen out with your parents, or your parents are unwilling to complete income assessment forms or contribute towards your student finance.*

If you are unable to provide this evidence, you should contact the Funding Team for advice [funding@essex.ac.uk](mailto:funding@essex.ac.uk)

## **How to apply**

**The deadline to apply for the bursary for 2022-23 is 31 July 2023**

To apply for the Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary, you will need to do the following:

1. Ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria above
2. Carefully read these Terms and Conditions
3. Register for the [Blackbullion](#) online money management website if you do not already have an account
4. Click the 'Funds' tab and select 'Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary'
5. Follow the instructions to complete the declaration form, upload the required evidence and submit your application

## Assessment and payment

- If eligible, you may receive a bursary of £1,500 if you are studying full time, or £750 if you are studying part time.
- Payments will be processed in May of the academic year you are studying, for this year payment will be made in May 2023.
- Awards will be paid via BACS to your nominated bank account, as stated in your application

## Can I hold this with other awards?

The Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary cannot be held in conjunction with the Refugee Bursary offered as part of the [University Access and Participation Plan](#) funding.

With the exception of the above, the Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary can be held in conjunction with other University awards that you may be eligible for, including financial support.

## Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of your outcome of your application, you can appeal within 10 working days of your outcome email from Blackbullion. Appeals should be sent to the [Funding Team](#).

Your appeal will be considered at the discretion of the Student Services Manager or their nominee.

## Resolution of disputes

Acceptance of the Care Leaver and Estranged Bursary constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions. Registered students should contact the [Funding Team](#) in the first instance for guidance regarding this award. In cases not covered by the above terms and conditions, or where a student claims exceptional circumstances, or disputes a decision not to make payments due under this scheme, final appeals on decisions regarding eligibility must be made via the [Student Complaints process](#). The Academic Registrar or their nominee will review the case and their decision will be final.

**NOTE: These terms and conditions apply to the Care Experienced and Estranged Bursary awarded to students for the academic year 2022-23. The University of Essex reserves the right to update these terms and conditions as necessary.**